

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (Previously Presented): A method for producing a nonwoven fiber composite for the manufacture of filters in the tobacco industry, the method comprising:

feeding separated fiber materials to a fluidized bed;
transporting the separated fiber material to a suction conveyor essentially by a transport air flow flowing in the fluidized bed in the direction of the suction conveyor; and
compiling the fiber material on the rod-forming device.

2. Cancelled.

3. (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 2, further comprising providing fibers of different compositions.

4. (Original): The method according to claim 1, wherein the fibers in the fluidized bed further comprises at least one additive.

5. (Original): The method according to claim 1, wherein the separated fibers have a length of from about 2 to about 100mm.

6. (Original): The method according to claim 1, wherein the average fiber diameter of the separated fibers is in the range of from about 10 to about 40 μ m.

7. (Original): The method according to claim 1, wherein the average fiber diameter of the separated fibers is in the range of from about 20 to about 38 μ m.

8. (Original): The method according to claim 1, wherein the separated fibers are synthetic fibers.

9. (Original): The method according to claim 8, wherein the fiber strength of the synthetic fibers is from about 1 to about 20 dtex.

10. (Original): The method according to claim 8, wherein the fiber strength of the synthetic fibers is from about 2 to about 6 dtex.

11. (Original): The method according to claim 1, further comprising successively feeding separated fiber materials of differing composition to the fluidized bed.

12. (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the feeding step further comprises the separating of fibers.

13. (Original): The method according to claim 1, wherein the method further comprises forming a continuous fiber filter rod from the compiled fibers, and dividing the continuous rod into individual filter sections.

14. (Withdrawn): An arrangement of a continuous rod machine for use in the tobacco industry, comprising:

at least one filter-material feeding device comprising a metering element for dispensing metered amounts of separated filter material;

a continuous-rod forming device; and

a fluidized bed for transporting the filter material from the filter material feeding device to the continuous rod-forming device.

15. (Withdrawn): The continuous rod machine arrangement according to claim 14, wherein the filter material feeding device further comprises at least one conveying element.

16. (Withdrawn): The continuous rod machine arrangement according to claim 14, wherein the at least one conveying element comprises at least one roller.

17. (Withdrawn): The continuous rod machine arrangement according to claim 14, wherein the filter material feeding device supplies the separated fibers to the metering element.

18. (Withdrawn): The continuous rod machine arrangement according to claim 14, wherein the fluidized bed comprises a filter material directing channel.
19. (Withdrawn): The continuous rod machine arrangement according to claim 14, wherein the fluidized bed is a filter material directing channel.
20. (Withdrawn): The continuous rod machine arrangement according to claim 14, wherein the fluidized bed comprises a curved portion, initially transporting the fluidized filter material in a downward direction then transitioning to a horizontal position before subsequently directing the fluidized filter material in an upward direction.
21. (Withdrawn): The continuous rod machine arrangement according to claim 20, wherein the curve comprises an elliptical shape increasing in radius in the transporting direction.
22. (Withdrawn): The continuous rod machine arrangement according to claim 14, wherein the filter material feeding device further comprises a filter material separating device.
23. (Withdrawn): The continuous rod machine arrangement according to claim 22, wherein the filter feeding device separating device comprises a fiber crusher.
24. (Withdrawn): The continuous rod machine arrangement according to claim 23,

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Application No.: 10/815,933

wherein the fiber crusher comprises an element selected from the group consisting of at least one cutting drum and at least one hammer crusher and combinations thereof.

25. (Withdrawn): The continuous rod machine arrangement according to claims 22, wherein the filter material feeding device meters the filter material to the separating device.

26. (Withdrawn): The continuous rod machine arrangement according to claim 14, wherein the arrangement further comprises at least two filter material feeding devices.